

NEW JERSEY STATE POLICE STANDING OPERATING PROCEDURE

SP 437 (Rev. 7/09)
REFERENCE

NUMBER

F13

EFFECTIVE DATE

July 27, 2012

SUBJECT

ESCORTS

O.P.I. NUMBER

M000

RESCINDS

S.O.P. F13, dated 7/20/07

The New Jersey State Police is often called upon to provide police escorts to assist in the safe travel and transport of people and certain cargo. These escorts shall only be conducted in the best interest of public safety. This order provides guidance as to when state police escorts are appropriate, and establishes a mandatory procedure to be followed whenever authorization for an escort is sought. **No state police escorts shall be conducted except as may be authorized pursuant to this order.**

This order consists of the following numbered sections:

- I. Policy
- II. When State Police Escorts May Be Authorized
- III. Authorization Procedures
- IV. Conducting Escorts
- V. Effect

I. Policy:

A. Public Safety Is Paramount.

B. All state police escorts shall be conducted reasonably, responsibly, and in a manner that promotes the safety of the public. State police vehicles serve as an example to the motoring public and shall be operated with utmost integrity and professionalism. While escorts are appropriate in certain circumstances, such as to facilitate traffic flow, secure the travel of certain motorcades, and aid the safe travel of emergency vehicles, they must always be carried out safely and in a manner that respects and protects the public. Absent exigent circumstances and those limited instances when security and/or safety necessitate otherwise, all escorts will be conducted within posted speed limits and in compliance with all other traffic laws.

C. Nothing in this order shall be construed to limit the Superintendent in authorizing escorts when deemed necessary.

II. When State Police Escorts May Be Authorized:

A. Troop commanders may authorize state police escorts in the following instances:

1. Assisting the safe travel of government officials and other dignitaries, such as:
 - a. Representatives of the United States government
 - b. Visiting governors
 - c. Representatives of foreign governments at the request of the U.S. Department of State
 - d. Political candidates or other dignitaries

NOTE: When receiving requests for escorts of government officials or other dignitaries, the state police will only provide escorts when an official request is made by the appropriate government agency.

2. Medical emergency cases (e.g., the time-sensitive transporting of patients or human organs)
3. High-risk prisoner transports, at the request of the appropriate corrections or law enforcement agency
4. Funerals of dignitaries, including enlisted or retired state police personnel
5. Transport of certain protected witnesses
6. Transport of explosive or otherwise-hazardous materials, dangerously oversized loads, or sensitive cargo for which police protection is required
7. Providing security pursuant to a written agreement between the state police and a public agency

B. Only the Field Operations Section Commanding Officer may authorize state police escorts in instances other than those listed above. Such escorts may only be authorized in instances when, upon evaluating all relevant information and considering the factors listed in Section II., Paragraph C., the Field Operations Section Commanding Officer determines that an escort is necessary for public safety.

C. When determining whether any escort will be authorized, the following factors should be carefully considered:

1. Number and type of vehicles to be escorted, and nature of any cargo being transported

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2. Dates, times, and estimated duration
3. Travel plan, routes, roadways, and estimated distance
4. Traffic conditions of the roadways based on time of day, weather, construction, closures, or other travel factors
5. Number of state police vehicles and personnel required to conduct the escort in a manner that sufficiently ensures the safety of the public
6. Availability of non-state police resources to conduct the escort in a manner that sufficiently ensures the safety of the public
7. Any other articulated factors which would impact the safety of the public

NOTE: This list provides guidance in assessing the risk to public safety and whether a state police escort may reduce that risk. It is not exhaustive. Depending on the circumstances of the requested escort, other factors may be considered in determining whether an escort should be authorized. All factors relevant to the particular escort request should be carefully considered in determining whether authorization is in the best interest of public safety.

III. Authorization Procedures:

A. Four levels of review

1. The troop operations officer shall conduct the **Level 1 review**
2. The deputy troop commander shall conduct the **Level 2 review**
3. The troop commander shall conduct the **Level 3 review**
4. The Field Operations Section Commanding Officer shall conduct the **Level 4 review**

NOTE: A Level 4 review is only required if the request involves an escort other than those seven instances listed in Section II., Paragraph A.

B. For every level of review, the reviewer shall:

1. Evaluate the information received, and carefully consider the factors set forth in Section II., Paragraph C., before deciding whether to approve or deny the request for escort

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2. Indicate on the Escort Request form (S.P. 148, Annex A) whether the request is approved or denied, and document the reason for approval or denial
3. Sign the form
4. Forward approved requests to the next level of review, and forward denied requests to the troop operations officer who shall ensure that all completed Escort Request forms are filed and maintained at troop headquarters

C. Troop operations officer duties

In addition to conducting the Level 1 review, the troop operations officer shall:

1. Serve as intake for requests for escorts
2. Complete the Escort Request form
3. Ensure that all escorts receiving final approval are recorded using the Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) System call code "Escort"
4. Consult with the station commander of those patrol stations affected by or involved in the escort, and coordinate with other troop operation officers at other troop headquarters in those instances where an approved escort crosses into the geographic boundaries of, or may otherwise impact, those other troop headquarters
5. Ensure all Escort Request forms, both approved and denied, are forwarded to the Office of Law Enforcement Professional Standards on a quarterly basis

D. During non-business hours, requests for state police escorts will be directed to the Watch Operations Unit of the Regional Operations Intelligence Center (ROIC). The supervising officer of the Watch Operations Unit will ensure that:

1. The Escort Request form is completed
2. The request is forwarded to the appropriate troop commander for the proper level of review under Section III., Paragraph A. of this order
3. The requesting agency or individual is notified of the final approval or denial

NOTE: Any requests for escort captured on the Escort Request form generated by the ROIC during off-duty hours, will be forwarded to the appropriate troop operations officer as soon as operationally feasible.

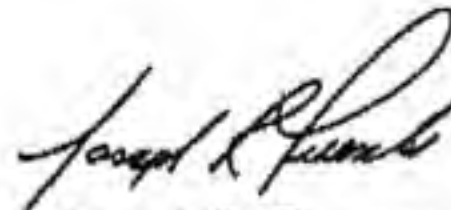
IV. Conducting Escorts:

Every escort shall be conducted safely and responsibly, keeping in mind at all times the safety of the public. To that end, absent exigent circumstances, the following shall apply.

- A. Escorts shall be conducted within posted speed limits and in compliance with all other traffic laws. In limited instances, for the purpose of maintaining the security of the escorted party and the safety of the motoring public, it may be tactically necessary for the escort to deviate from the posted speed limit and certain traffic laws. Absent those limited instances and any exigent circumstances, all posted speed limits and other traffic laws shall be followed.
- B. Whenever possible, escorts and escorted vehicles shall be confined to one lane of travel, will avoid traveling in the passing lanes, and will turn on headlights and/or hazard blinkers to ensure the escorted caravan remains together and easily identifiable from other motorists. Sirens will not be used unless absolutely necessary.
- C. State police escorts shall instruct the operators of the escorted vehicles on the manner in which the escort will be conducted, and make provisions for all tolls to be paid by the escorted vehicles prior to, during, or following the escort.
- D. Escorts shall be conducted for only the dates, times, distances, and routes authorized in advance.
- E. Staffing of any escort shall be sufficient to ensure the safety of the motoring public. Considerations may include the experience of the assigned trooper(s), the necessity of including a lead unit and trail unit in the escort, and the availability and use of other techniques and resources to ensure the public is protected.

V. Effect:

In accordance with S.O.P. A1, "Orders," the Field Operations Section Commanding Officer shall notify the Planning and Logistical Support Bureau Chief, via channels, of any changes that may be necessary in this order.



Joseph R. Fuentes
Colonel
Superintendent



NEW JERSEY STATE POLICE
Escort Request

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ANNEX A

NAME OF ENTITY:

TELEPHONE NUMBER:

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ADDRESS: Number & Street

City

State

Zip Code

CONTACT: Name

Telephone

Ext.

Fax

Email Address

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() -

24-HOUR CONTACT INFORMATION: Name

Telephone

() -

Complete Description of Escort Requested:

Specifically describe all duties and responsibilities, including the following: 1) name and title of dignitary escorted if applicable; 2) number and type of vehicles to be escorted, and the nature of any cargo being transported; 3) dates, times, and estimated duration; 4) travel plan, routes, roadways, and estimated distance; 5) anticipated traffic conditions of the roadways based on the time of day, weather, construction, closures or other travel factors; 6) number of state police vehicles and personnel required to conduct the escort; 7) availability of non-state police resources; and 8) any other articulated factors which would impact the safety of the public.
NOTE: This list is not exhaustive. Depending on the circumstances of the requested escort, other factors may be considered in determining whether an escort should be authorized. Document all factors considered.

REASON FOR APPROVAL OR DENIAL:

TROOP OPERATIONS OFFICER:	DATE:	SIGNATURE	APPROVED <input type="checkbox"/> DENIED <input type="checkbox"/>
DEPUTY TROOP COMMANDER:	DATE:	SIGNATURE	APPROVED <input type="checkbox"/> DENIED <input type="checkbox"/>
TROOP COMMANDER:	DATE:	SIGNATURE	APPROVED <input type="checkbox"/> DENIED <input type="checkbox"/>
FIELD OPERATIONS SECTION COMMANDING OFFICER:	DATE:	SIGNATURE	APPROVED <input type="checkbox"/> DENIED <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>